

10/562,984 06/26/2001

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PATENT

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 4, lines 19-35, with the following amended paragraph:

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This object is achieved by a method for producing hydroxylammonium salts by reacting ~~nitrous oxide~~ nitrogen monoxide (NO) with a molar hydrogen surplus in an aqueous medium of strong mineral acids in the presence of a noble metal catalyst suspended on a carbon-based support at excess pressure up to 10 bar and temperatures up to 80°C, the hydroxylammonium salt being constantly removed from the reaction vessel, said vessel being a stirred reactor with an agitator shaft and agitator blades attached to it via a hub and bearing surface or support, wherein, according to the invention

- a gas inlet and distribution system is provided in the lower part of the stirred reactor,
- a disk agitator is placed immediately above, the hub with bearing surface or support of which comprising angled, concave and tilted agitator blades that rotate their angled and concave sides in the direction of motion (i.e. their concave sides move against the liquid), and

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Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 16-30, with the following amended paragraph:

It is an advantage of the method according to the invention that the reduction reaction, due to the effect of the special agitating apparatus, surprisingly proceeds at an extraordinarily high rate, facilitating increased throughput without the need to enlarge the reaction chamber. This outcome specifically results from the special design of the modified disk agitator that is able to disperse the gas mixture consisting of nitrogen monoxide and [[oxygen]] hydrogen and introduced directly below the agitator from a gas inlet and distribution system extremely finely, as compared to other agitator types, in the aqueous sulfuric acid containing the platinum catalyst suspended on a support, to achieve complete gas distribution and high gas bubble recirculation. The resulting greatly improved mass transfer influences the processes that take place on the surface of the catalyst to an unexpectedly high degree.